THE DEPUTUY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) The total number of post offices of Gujarat is 8818 as on 30.9.91.

(b) and (c). During the Seventh Five Year Plan only one extra departmental branch post office namely Bhestan extra departmental branch post office was upgraded in Surat district of Vadodara Postal Region.

Backlog of Vacancies Reserved for SCs/STs

1600. SHRI KRISHAN DUTT SULTANPURI: Will the Minister of WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the backlog of vacancies of posts reserved for scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes candidates, both in the category of officers and other categories, in the Ministry of Welfare, in the beginning of this year;

(b) the progress made in filling up these reserved posts during the last three months; and

(c) the time by which the remaining reserved posts are expected to be filled up?

THE MINISTER OF WELFARE (SHRI SITARAM KESRI): (a) to (c). The number of vacant posts in the Ministry is reported to the Department of Personnel & Training from time to time. The posts are filled up under the Central Staffing Scheme or the Central Secretariat Services Scheme by Department of Personnel and Training who also monitor the fulfilment of reservation quota for Scheduled Castes/Scheduled Tribes in respect of such posts. There are only a few posts for which recruitment is made directly by the Ministry of Welfare. There is no backing in raspect of such posts in the Ministry of Welfare.

Target Achievement of Post and Telegraph Office in Kerala

1601. SHRI THAYIL JOHN ANJALOSE: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state:

(a) the target fixed for setting up of post and telegraph offices in Alleppey and Pathanamthitta districts in Kerala during 1990-91;

(b) whether the targets have been achieved;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor; and

(d) the number of post and telegraph offices proposed to be set up during 1991-92?

THE DEPUTY MINISTER IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI P.V. RANGAYYA NAIDU): (a) and (b). A target of opening 50 extra-departmental branch postal offices was fixed for Kerala Postal circle during 1990-91 which has been achieved. No seperate target in this respect for opening of Post Offices and telegraph offices was fixed for these two districts during 1990-91. However, two extra-departmental branch post offices in Alleppey and 8 in Pathanamathitta district were opened during the year.

(c) The question does not arise in view of (a) and (b) above.

(d) A target for opening 55 extra-departmental branch post offices has been fixed for Kerala Post Circle during the year 1991-92. This includes a target of opening 5 extra-departmental branch post offices for Lakshadweep Union territory. It is further proposed to open 4 extra departmental branch post offices at Pathanamathitta and 2 in Alleppey district during 1991-92 subject to justification and within the overall target fixed

in this respect for Kerala postal Circle. There is, however, no proposal to open telegraph offices in Alleppey and Pathanamthitta districts during 1991-92.

Biogas Plants in Maharashtra

1602. SHRI B. DEVARAJAN: Will the Minister of POWER AND NON-CONENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES be pleased to state:

(a) the number of biogas plants installed in operation in the country, State-wise;

(b) whether any major improvements in design and technology have been effected during the last three years;

(c) the quantum of fuelwood saved annually due to these biogas plant; and

(d) the action the Government propose to take to increase the number of biogas plants in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF POWER AND NON-CONVENTIONAL ENERGY SOURCES (SHRI KALPA NATH RAI): (a) State-wise information of the number of family type biogas plants installed during the period 1981-82 to 1990-91 under the Central Sector Scheme 'National Project for Biogas Development' is given in the attached Statement. The operation of biogas plants is the responsibility of individual owners and depends upon a number of factors, such as availability of cattle dung and water, climate.

(b) Yes, Sir. Two new designs of biogas plants, one for processing of vegetable waste and green biomass and another for use of enriched digested slurry for coating of seeds for increasing production, have been developed during the last three years.

(c) It is estimated that biogas plants installed so far in the country are producing fuel-gas, equivalent of about 50 lakh tonnes of firewood annually.

(d) Government has already taken action to increase the number of biogas plants in the country. The National Project for Biogas Development envisage a target of setting up of 1.47 lakh biogas plants during 1991-92 and provides for a number of financial and other incentives including Central subsides, turn-key job fee, repair and maintenance charges, technical and training support, and publicity and extension.

STATEMENT

State-Wise total number of family size Biogas Plants set up during 1981-82 to 1990-91 under National Project on Biogas Development

Sl.No.	*State/Union Territories*	*Total No. of Plants set up.*
1.	Andhra Pradesh	97905
2.	Arunachal Pradesh	52
3.	Assam	9748
4.	Bihar	62866